Lithuanian Deputy Foreign Minister Albinas Januska told Reuters he had been advised by Russian ambassador that Kozyrev's statements did not apply to country.

Estonia's Foreign Ministry said it had asked Russia for ``clarification'' of Kozyrev's remarks. ``Threatening the use of force against sovereign states is not in accordance with international standards of behaviour,'' a statement said.

Latvia's Foreign Ministry said it would probably comment on the matter later on Wednesday.

Ukraine, Russia's Slav neighbour usually extremely sensitive to anything which it sees as an attempt on its independence, did not appear too much worried by Kozyrev's statement.

``Some of the Russian leadership are now acting under the influence of the approaching elections,'' Dmytro Tabachnyk, a senior aide to Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma told Reuters in a reference to parliamentary elections due in December.

``Kozyrev is a member of parliament and is of course is thinking about re-election. The position of one minister is not the same as that of Russia's executive authorities,'' he added.